

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

COUNCIL MINUTES

NOVEMBER 14, 2013 - 7:30 P.M.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Pote called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM and read the following statement: Under the provisions of N.J.S.A.10:4-6 et seq., notice of the time and place of this meeting was given by way of annual notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG and a MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, SERVING HOME AND ABROAD.

Mayor Pote also called for a moment of Silence for Council President Debra Joren's Dad Jack Penn, who recently passed.

ROLL CALL

Joren [P] Black [P] Franklin [P] Nehls [P] Gibbs [P]
Beck-Clemens [P]

Also present were Administrator Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, and Clerk Michelle DeRocco,

There were 10 members of the public present.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin reported that he and CFO Bill Hance have been discussing line item transfers, and he again stressed the difficulty of having to work within the 2% budget cap. He said the unexpended balances from 2012 were \$90,000, and it is anticipated that the unexpended balances from the 2013 budget could be about \$150,000. He explained that this number becomes the surplus for 2015, noting its not a very safe balance.

2. Police - Council President Joren thanked the Council and Borough Staff for their support and prayers for her and her family through the difficult days after the passing of her Dad. In regard to the Police Committee, she announced Acting Chief Cina has been interviewing potential dispatchers, and that the Department has met and continues to communicate with the local retail establishments in regard to the Ordinance that requires establishments to close at 10:00 PM on Thanksgiving, but allows them to open at midnight. Councilwoman Joren reported that on November 14, 2014, the NJ Law Enforcement officially "accredited" the Department and she congratulated them on this accomplishment.

3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds - Councilman Nehls noted the introduction of a Bond Ordinance on the agenda for the road improvements to be done on Lakeview Avenue and Cedar Road. He reported the Borough has received a temporary permit extension from the DEP for the tree debris stored at the Ness Property. He urged anyone who needed mulch to "come and get it" - and said it is now free. Councilman Nehls said meetings are being scheduled to discuss the transfer of sewer responsibilities with the effected entities. He also reported the Johnston Drive and Valley Drive sewer project will begin very soon.

4. Public Affairs:

Open Space - Councilwoman Beck-Clemens said the Committee continues to receive inquiries from residents regarding the status of the Ness property. She said they are not scheduled to meet again until January.

Environmental - Councilman Gibbs reported that the October 28th agenda of the Commission was full. He said Councilman Black's son happens to be the Water Shed Ambassador and was present and said he attends many Environmental meetings in our area and Watchung's was one of the better run meetings. Councilman Gibbs said the tree ordinance was discussed, and the Commission will be requesting a review by the Laws and Ordinance Committee with the request that a developer be required to test the soil, and that a percentage of flowering trees be required when replacing or for new developments. He said fracking was discussed, and they will continue to discuss at their next meeting.

He said also discussed was the issue of the Port Ambrose pipeline in New York and explained that this is a power plant located in Long Island that will be transporting natural gas, pending approval. He said the concern is the construction of this line and the potential damage it could cause to our shores. Councilman Gibbs said the Commission was also interested in the outcome of the Avalon application that is being heard by the Planning Board.

Recreation - Councilwoman Beck-Clemens said the Harvest Festival was wonderful and thanked all who worked together to coordinate the Festival, the Tennis Court ribbon cutting, and the Texier House Museum's Open House. She read the Recreation Coordinator's report. Mayor Pote thanked the Recreation Commission and Linda Monetti for organizing the ribbon cutting ceremony and for the signage at the Tennis Courts.

Historical - Councilwoman Beck-Clemens announced Eagle Scout Justin Scalera's book signing is scheduled for next week at the Library, and said the Veteran's Day Ceremony was very nice and also said Mr. Henry Long has agreed to be interviewed for the Historical Committee's ongoing video history project. She announced the Rescue Squad's annual Tree of Lights Ceremony will be held on December 7th beginning at 5:30 PM. Mayor Pote said the Veteran's Day tribute to Mr. Long was excellent and thanked Councilman Franklin for putting the program together.

Board of Health - Councilman Black had nothing to report, but said the next meeting is scheduled for December 11th at 7:00 PM.

5. Fire - Councilman Black had no report, however, said the refurbishing of the Fire House is in progress. Mayor Pote said he is looking forward to seeing the timeline for the project. Councilman Black said he attended the Rescue Squad's meeting and Claire Ohl was honored for her 30 years of service. He said he was proud to be a part of the dedication and thanked Squad Vice President Denise Wilson who makes his job as liaison much easier.

6. Laws/Ordinances - Councilwoman Joren said a meeting is scheduled for a week from Monday, and she will report at the next meeting.

REPORTS - OTHER:

7. Engineer - No report was presented.

8. Police Chief - No report was presented.

9. Fire Department - No report was presented.

10. Rescue Squad - Vice President Denise Wilson reported the preparation for this year's Tree of Lights are underway, and this year's event will be held on December 7th and begin at 5:30 PM. She said last month the Squad attended both the Harvest Festival and the Fire Department's Pig Roast. She announced that at their November meeting, the Squad welcomed 3 new members, and 2 probationary cadets. Also at that meeting, member Claire Ohl was honored for 30 years of dedication and commitment to the Squad. Ms. Wilson said that on Friday, the Squad will be assisting the Cub Scouts in their quest to achieve their Readyman Badges. The list of officers were officially voted on and are as follows: Captain, Adam Wexler; 1st Lt., Rich Young; 2nd Lt., Charles Pivnichny; Operations Sgt., Logan Taylor; Administration Sgt., Jessica Ray; President, Don Monetti; Vice President, Denise Wilson; Treasurer, Claire Ohl; Recording Secy., Alison Diecke; Admin. Secy., Noah Monetti. She said the Squad responded to 20 calls in October.

11. Emergency Management - Deputy Coordinator Skip Bell announced the Annexes are under review and they are preparing to meet the February submission deadline.

12. Attorney - Mr. Cruz had nothing to report, however, he said he had one item for discussion in Executive Session.

13. Clerk - Mrs. DeRocco reminded all the Holiday Party for Borough employees and volunteers is scheduled for December 6th and to please RSVP if you plan on attending.

14. Administrator - Mr. Atkins announced a special meeting will be held on Monday morning, November 18th, and the only item on the agenda is the award of bid for the Lakeview/Cedar Road project. He congratulated the candidates - Mayor Pote, Councilman Nehls, Councilwoman Beck-Clemens, and Councilman Gibbs on their General Election victories and said he welcomed the opportunity to work with them again.

Mayor Pote announced that he attended the annual meeting of the Middle Brook Regional Health Commission and learned so much. He asked Health Officer Kevin Sumner to come this evening so that everyone can be more informed to the programs and services we benefit from as a member of the Commission.

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

No one desired to be heard.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A Public Hearing on Ordinance OR:13/22 entitled: **“AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 9-4 OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG BY ADDING A NEW PARAGRAPH 9-4.1 TITLED “PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION LICENSE WITH BROAD PACKAGE PRIVILEGES (TYPE 32); HOURS OF SALE.”** was held.

Council President Joren moved a public hearing be held with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Nehls, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens, “aye”.

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, complimented the Council on their quick action on this Ordinance amendment.

With no one else from the Public wishing to be heard, Council President Joren closed the public hearing and moved the following resolution:

R1:11/14/13 Adoption of OR:13/22 - Amend Code / Hours of Sale - Liquor License #44

Councilman Nehls seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Nehls, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens, “aye”.

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NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda items listed below were unanimously accepted, following a motion by Councilwoman Joren, a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Nehls, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens: “aye”.

Approval of the following Council minutes:

October 24, 2013

October 24, 2013 Special Meeting and Executive Session

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Police Activity Report - September, 2013

Building Department Report - October, 2013

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

None

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CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The Consent Agenda resolutions listed below were unanimously adopted following a motion by Council President Joren and a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call as follows: Joren, , Black, Franklin, Nehls, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens, “aye”.

R2:11/14/13 Honoring Claire Ohl - Rescue Squad / 30 Years of Service

R3: Appointment to Fire Department - Noah Monetti

R4: Purchases Over \$2,000. - Traffic Safety Service; Watchung Service Center; Atlantic Tactical; Highway Products, Inc.;

R5: Purchase Over \$2,000. and Waive Chapt. 2-25.10 - Sparta Tire

R6: Authorize Expansion of Contract - Continuing Housing Advisory Services / Maser Consulting

R7: Authorize Cancellation of Tax Sale Certificate #1-2010 - 100 Deer Run

R8: Authorize Return of Duplicate 4th Qtr. Tax Payment - 940 Johnston Drive

R9: Authorize Clerk to Advertise Requests for Proposals (RFP's) - 2014 Professional

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NON--CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: Items listed below will be individually addressed and acted upon accordingly. Council reserves the right to refer an item to Committee for further review and discussion.

Proposed Bond Ordinance OR:13/23 entitled: "BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE IMPROVEMENT OF CEDAR ROAD AND LAKEVIEW AVENUE, PARTLY AS A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT AND PARTLY AS A LOCAL IMPROVEMENT, IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$1,075,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO APPROPRIATE A STATE GRANT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS." was introduced. Council President Joren moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Council President Joren moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of public hearing.

R10: Introduction of Assessment Bond Ordinance OR:13/23 - Cedar Road / Lakeview

The motion was seconded by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Nehls, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens "aye". Public Hearing to be held on December 12, 2013.

Kevin Sumner - Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission Report

Mr. Sumner thanked the Mayor for inviting him this evening. Mr. Sumner said he has been with the Middle Brook Regional Health Commission for 29 years, and has worked his way up through the ranks. He gave a history of his background and education, and spoke about how the Commission was formed. He said Watchung has been a member since 1970, and the other towns that make up the Commission are Bound Brook, Green Brook, South Bound Brook and Warren. He said Middlesex left the Commission a couple of years back. He explained the essential services that the Commission provides to its municipalities that include monitoring reportable diseases, rabies clinics, community health assessments, vital statistics, enforcement of laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety, and inspection of food establishments, bathing facilities, day care facilities, camps, tattoo parlors. He spoke of their Strategic Plan which includes emergency preparedness, and announced some new programs, such as their Residential Pool Safety program.

Mayor Pote thanked Kevin Sumner and Board of Health member Ron Jubin who was also present. Mayor Pote said the money spent on these services is well spent, and he doubts that the County would be able to provide the same services with the same responsiveness. He said he appreciated the passion and dedication that Mr. Sumner brings, and commended him on being this year's recipient of the Frank Osbourn Award that will be presented at the NJSLOM Conference this month. Mr. Sumner said the Borough's local Board of Health is very active and engaged, and Mr. Jubin's degree in virology is an asset.

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PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, said there are many political signs around the Borough, in particular many still on Bonnie Burn Road, and asked if they can be picked up. She said when she was a member of the Environmental Commission there was a list of trees not to plant. Councilman Gibbs responded that there is a list from the State of trees to plant and said he would obtain a copy of the list for her.

Council President Joren moved the following resolution with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Nehls, Gibbs, Beck-Clemens, "aye."

R11: 11/14/13 Executive Session - Attorney/Client Privilege

Upon returning to regular session at 10:35 P.M., all members previously present were again in attendance.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council the meeting was adjourned at 10:37 PM to the call of the Chair and to the next Council meeting to be a Special Meeting that will be held on Monday, November 18, 2013 at 8:00 A.M., and the next scheduled Council meeting to be held on Monday, November 25, 2013 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC

